

# The Galileo Program, University High School

## 1. Program Overview

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Through the Galileo program, students are engaged and motivated by a challenging and stimulating program that integrates lifelong learning skills within a rich inquiry and community-based curriculum. Students are given opportunities to personally and socially develop and are known and encouraged by a team of teachers who provide personalised feedback and support. The expectations within the program are high and students are encouraged to extend themselves as thinkers becoming lifelong learners, as well as confident and responsible global citizens.

### Core Principles of Galileo

#### The Program aims to develop students who:

- are socially aware, ethical, and caring global citizens
- are independent and self-aware learners who set goals, reflect and evaluate their own progress
- pose critical questions about their world and use traditional, online and community resources to develop and enact solutions
- work cooperatively to complete complex tasks with teams of peers
- are connected to fellow students, staff and the school

#### Teaching and learning in Galileo involves:

- Tasks that require complex thought, creativity and allow time for exploration
- Students' input and decision-making about content, process and assessment;
- Team processes involving co-operation, communication, negotiation.
- Recognising and meeting individual differences in interest, achievement and learning styles
- Class arrangements for strengthened teacher-student relationships
- Team-teaching and ongoing professional learning for staff;
- Integration of technologies and rich resources
- Progressively increasing levels of student independence and responsibility
- Strong community partnerships and engagement in real life issues

## 2. Program Elements

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The program is completed over one school term, lasting eight to eleven weeks, and includes the following elements:

- Weekly Inquiry Trails
- Skills Based Workshops
- An extended Team Project including
  - Research Presentation
  - Action Project
  - Student-designed Investigative Trail
  - Group presentation
- Community Service at local Primary Schools
- Weekly online reflective and academic written work
- Camp
- Individual Student-Parent Conference

## **Element Descriptions**

### **Inquiry Trails – The City as Classroom**

The Galileo Program provides an inquiry-based framework for students to build their own understanding of a range of issues relating to Melbourne. The trails offer real-world opportunities for testing and applying teamwork and leadership skills, personal and social learning.

Some of the key questions students will explore include:

- How liveable is Melbourne?
- How sustainable is Melbourne?
- What makes a good citizen in the 21<sup>st</sup> century?

Using Melbourne as our classroom, students will explore a different aspect of city life each week, including:

- Justice
- Environment
- History
- Religion
- Art
- Economy
- Health
- Education
- Community

**Skills Based Workshops**– explicit teaching and learning around key personal, social and interdisciplinary skills. Topics include thinking, research, first-aid, communication, team building, ethics, resilience, leadership, first aid, interviewing, surveying, public speaking and resume writing.

**Team Project** – a four part team project that incorporates background and in-the-field research based on a set of student-generated questions exploring an aspect of life in Melbourne. It gives students an extended opportunity to examine real-world issues in partnership with others as well as contribute to their community through a long-term action project. At the end of the term, students will provide feedback on their own work, contributions and learning through formalized reflection, self-evaluation and presentation to an audience of teachers and peers.

**Community Service** – an extended opportunity to participate responsibly in a community setting outside of the school, with the aim of making a contribution to social and community well-being. Students will visit one of four local primary schools for one morning per week.

**Camp** – Students will have the opportunity to participate in a camp comprising both student-led and teacher facilitated activities. The camp will have an environmental and regional focus, as well as providing opportunities for further team skills development.

**Parent-Student Conference** – individually, students will present and celebrate their learning over the term in a formal interview with parents/guardians and their teacher.

### 3. Program Structure and Organisation

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#### Weekly Structure

The timetable varies week-by-week. The basic structure is given below:

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1	Year 9 Electives	Community Service/ Skills Workshop	Investigative Trail	Community Service/ Skills Workshop	Post Trail Activity/ Reflection
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3		Thinking Skills Activity		Team Project	Problem Solving Based Activity
4	Introduction to weekly theme				
5	Team Project	Pre-Trail Preparation		Year 9 Electives	Sport
6					

#### Physical resources

The Galileo program is housed in “The Loft” and also uses other teaching spaces around the school. The use of these spaces allows:

- Formal and informal teaching and learning arrangements
- Student ownership of space
- Break out areas for small group work
- The development of a rooftop garden

The Galileo Program incorporates a 1-to-1 laptop program.

### 4. Assessment

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#### Assessment in Galileo involves:

- Explicit regular student reflection on their learning.
- Team-based project tasks, assessed both formally and informally.
- Opportunities for ongoing assessment through observation and discussion in home groups.
- Providing further opportunities for reflection and self-assessment through the end-of-term Team Presentation and Student-Parent Conference.